

PostClassical Ensemble presents D.C. area premiere of Dmitri Shostakovich's score to silent film, *The New Babylon*

Conductor Angel Gil-Ordóñez leads PostClassical Ensemble as they perform Shostakovich's first film score live to a screening at AFI Silver on March 30th and 31st, 2018

Washington, D.C. (March XX, 2017) – An astonishing achievement from the peak of the Soviet silent film era, *The New Babylon* was the first of composer Dmitri Shostakovich's historic collaborations with filmmaker Grigori Kozintsev. PostClassical Ensemble, conducted by Angel Gil-Ordóñez, presents the D.C. area premiere of Shostakovich's score, performing live to a screening of the 1929 film at **AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center** on **Friday, March 30, 2018 at 8:30 p.m.** and **Saturday, March 31, 2018 at 2 p.m.** Runtime of the film is 93 minutes. Tickets and information are available at www.postclassical.com.

Both whimsical and tragic, *The New Babylon* is set during the Paris Commune, a socialist revolutionary government that ruled Paris for a short period in 1871. The film is centered around the forbidden romance between a department store shopgirl (Elena Kuzmina) and a young soldier (Pyotr Sobolevsky) who find themselves on opposing sides of the political turmoil. Originally banned for its excess and aesthetic frivolity, this energetic avant-garde extravaganza represents the apex of the experimental Factory of the Eccentric Actor (FEKS), founded by directors Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg, and was to be their final silent film.

New Yorker music critic Alex Ross wrote of *The New Babylon*: "Kozintsev, together with Leonid Trauberg, aped the madcap pacing of the circus, the variety theater, and American movies, and Shostakovich followed suit."

The New Babylon was the beginning of a fruitful collaborative partnership between Shostakovich and the filmmaker Kozintsev, which continued through their epochal *King Lear* (1971). The score, which bears the Opus number 18, was lost shortly after the premiere, and was only rediscovered shortly after Shostakovich's death in 1975.

About Angel Gil-Ordóñez

Angel Gil-Ordóñez is Music Director of PostClassical Ensemble, Principal Guest Conductor of New York's Perspectives Ensemble, and Music Director of the Georgetown University Orchestra. He also serves as lead advisor for Trinitate Philharmonia, a program in León, Mexico modeled on Venezuela's El Sistema. He has appeared as guest conductor with the American Composers Orchestra, Opera Colorado, Pacific Symphony, Hartford Symphony, Brooklyn Philharmonic, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. An unwavering advocate for Spanish repertoire, Gil-Ordóñez received the Royal Order of Queen Isabella, the country's highest civilian decoration, for his devotion to sharing Spanish culture with the world. He has recorded seven albums for Naxos, including PostClassical Ensemble's Virgil Thomson and Copland CD/DVDs, and the spring 2017 release for Naxos celebrating the centenary of American composer Lou Harrison. More about Gil-Ordóñez can be found at his website, www.gilordonez.com.

About Joseph Horowitz

PCE Executive Director Joseph Horowitz has long been a pioneer in classical music programming. As Executive Director of the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, resident orchestra of the Brooklyn Academy of Music, he received national attention for "The Russian Stravinsky," "American Transcendentalists," "Flamenco," and other festivals exploring the folk roots of concert works. For the NEH, he currently directs "Music Unwound," a national consortium of orchestras, festivals, and universities pursuing collaborative thematic programming; many Music Unwound festivals originate as PCE productions. Called "our nation's leading scholar of the symphony orchestra" by Charles Olton, former President of the American Symphony Orchestra League, Horowitz is also the award-winning author of ten books mainly dealing with the institutional history of classical music in the United States. Both his *Classical Music in America: A History* (2005) and *Artists in Exile: How Refugees from 20th Century War and Revolution Transformed the American Performing Arts* (2008) were named best books of the year by *The Economist*. His many honors and awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship, two NEH fellowships, an Honorary Doctorate from DePauw University, and a commendation from the Czech Parliament for his many festival projects exploring Dvořák in America. His website is www.josephhorowitz.com. His blog is www.artjournal.com/ug.

About PostClassical Ensemble

POSTCLASSICAL ENSEMBLE has been called "one of the country's most innovative music groups" (Philip Kennicott) and "wildly ambitious" (Anne Midgette). It was founded in 2003 by Angel Gil-Ordóñez and Joseph Horowitz as an experimental orchestral laboratory. PCE programming is thematic and cross-disciplinary, typically incorporating dance, art, film or theater, exploring unfamiliar works and recontextualizing standard repertoire. PCE concerts and recordings are regularly heard (and archived) on the WWFM Classical Network.

www.postclassical.com

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PRESS RELEASE

The New Babylon

DIR/SCR Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg.

USSR, 1929

b&w (93 minutes)

Friday, March 30, 2018 at 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 31, 2018 at 2 p.m.

AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center

8633 Colesville Road

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Tickets: \$20 (special student ticket pricing also available)



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